

## Auto trade surplus

Canada amassed a \$1.69-billion surplus in its auto-related trade with the United States in the first quarter of 1984, almost double that of a year earlier, according to preliminary figures compiled by Statistics Canada.

The largest part of the increase was attributed to the strong sales of cars and trucks built by the automotive manufacturers in Canadian plants for the US market. By comparison, Canada had an \$860-million auto trade surplus in the first quarter of 1983.

Imports from the United States soared during the quarter, increasing in value to \$5.6-billion or by 53.6 per cent. But exports rose even more, to \$7.3-billion or by 61.8 per cent.

The three-month surplus puts Canada well on the way to setting a new annual surplus record. Its best year was 1983 when it had a \$3.29-billion favourable balance. In 1982, it sold \$2.85-billion more to the United States than it bought.

## Radar systems track sales



Various radar units, manufactured by Tribar Industries of Weston, Ontario, are becoming increasingly popular in more than 46 countries, including Britain and Taiwan. The Design Canada award-winning company recently delivered units worth \$350 000 to Saudi Arabia. Tribar's radar devices have a number of applications — in police and marine patrol, in industry and in sports.

## Canadian game in hot pursuit of global market

Recently, so the story goes, the owners of the best-selling board game, Trivial Pursuit, received a request from a man in Thule, Greenland who wanted to know if a special Greenland version of the game could be manufactured.

After all, he figured, other countries have their own versions. Even Quebec has been accommodated with its *Quelques Arpents de Pièges*, roughly translated as *A Few Acres of Traps* — a pun on Voltaire's description of the province as a few acres of snow.

So why not a special Greenland game? Told that Greenland's population was not large enough to support the proposal, the man was advised to be content with the Danish version of Trivial Pursuit.

The request is one of the wackier ones heard by the four major shareholders of Horn Abbot Ltd. of Toronto, the company behind Trivial Pursuit. However, it does underline how popular the game has become with trivia buffs around the globe.

## World-wide sales

Chris Haney, one of the Canadian inventors of the game, forecasts world-wide retail sales of \$1-billion (US) this year. That is 30 million games, 20 million in the United States alone. So far this year, 700 000 sets made by licensee Chieftain Products Inc. of Toronto have been sold in Canada.

"And this isn't even the buying season," said Mr. Haney, who is still amazed at the game's success.

He noted that one of the larger toy company chains in the United States, Toys R Us Inc. of Rochelle Park, New Jersey, has asked for orders of up to one million games a month. But the US licensee, Selchow and Righter Co. of Bayshore, N.Y., cannot manufacture that many. So Toys R Us is only able to sell 200 000 games a month.

Outside estimates have put Horn Abbot's profit at a juicy \$60-million. Not bad for a game that was introduced to the United States only two years ago and made its Canadian debut in the fall of 1981.

In order to keep trivia followers continually interested, Mr. Haney and co-inventor Scott Abbot keep dreaming up special editions to add to the basic game called *Genus*. There are *All Star Sports*, *Silver Screen* and *Baby Boomer* volumes. A *Young Players* edition is scheduled to debut next month and *Genus II*, with general questions, will be available in October. Next winter *RPM*, the music edition, is due.

With all the copy-cat games now on the market, the owners of Trivial Pursuit have decided to undertake an intensive marketing program. There are plans to spend \$1-million on advertising in Britain alone.



Scott Abbot, one of the Canadian inventors of Trivial Pursuit.

By the end of the year, there will be a Trivial Pursuit television show, produced independently in Los Angeles. Mr. Haney said the show will be a "cross between Hollywood Squares and Saturday Night Live. A schtick for comedians".

## Special Playboy edition

Right now Horn Abbot representatives are holding preliminary talks with Playboy Enterprises Inc. of Chicago about a special Playboy edition of Trivial Pursuit. There will not be questions about playmates of the year or other sexual curiosities, Mr. Haney said, but rather a "best of" each Trivial Pursuit edition.

Talks are also going on with Walt Disney Productions of Burbank, California, regarding a family-oriented game and with Stroh Brewing Co. with a tavern version in mind.

The Trivial Pursuit name will also be found on jig-saw puzzles and T-shirts. "We didn't want to do this sort of marketing before because we didn't feel we needed it," Mr. Haney said. "But now we feel there is going to be a big shake-out in the game industry. There are 20 knock-offs in Canada alone and more in the United States."

Trivial Pursuit will soon be available in West Germany and there are plans to launch it in India, and China.